UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/977
20 October 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 19 OCTOBER 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ETHIOPIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

With reference to the letter addressed to you by the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations and its annex, the statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Eritrea, dated 14 October 1998 (S/1998/956), I have the honour to transmit to you a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia issued on 19 October 1998.

The above-mentioned statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Eritrea clearly shows the extent to which the Government of Eritrea goes to create confusion and to hoodwink the international community in connection with the Eritrean aggression against Ethiopia.

In this context, it is particularly evident that this latest statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Eritrea is designed to divert attention from the incontrovertible findings and conclusions of the Organization of African Unity Ministerial Committee that, "Badme town and its environs were administered by Ethiopia before 12 May 1998" and that "what happened in Badme between 6 and 12 May 1998 constitutes a fundamental element of the crisis" between the two countries.

I would be grateful if you could kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Duri MOHAMMED
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Ethiopia to the United Nations

Annex

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia issued on 19 October 1998

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia wishes to state the following in connection with the rather strange statement issued on 14 October 1998 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Eritrea.

1. There has been no map recently circulated by the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the diplomatic community, unless the reference is to a copy of a map made available to the diplomatic community in May of this year within days of the aggression by Eritrea. The purpose of the map was to indicate clearly, at the request of the diplomatic community, the area occupied by Eritrea on 12 May 1998, and the copy was based on maps used in Ethiopia for decades. As such, it is not a new map. However, true to form, the Eritrean authorities are playing their usual game of deception and duplicity with the international community.

2. The story about the recent wide distribution of the same map to Ethiopian schools and other government institutions is an Eritrean fabrication. Again, this is not new, either for the Eritrean Ministry of Foreign Affairs or for the Eritrean authorities.

3. The other parts of this odd statement, which as a whole is rather convoluted, are equally based on lies, distortions and fabrications apparently calculated to create confusion, which would only be dignified by a detailed response.